



May 17, 2006

**Formaldehyde Council, Inc., Statement Concerning  
CNN “Toxic Trailers” Report, Aired on American Morning, May 16, 2006**

CNN’s American Morning program aired a report on May 16 entitled “Toxic Trailers” that concerned travel trailers provided by the Federal Emergency Management Agency to some Hurricane Katrina evacuees. Several evacuees had complained of feeling ill from inhaling air inside the trailers and blamed their symptoms on formaldehyde off-gassing from wood products used in constructing the trailers.

Formaldehyde Council, Inc. (FCI) members who are involved in the production of resins based on formaldehyde chemistry and on wood products made using these resins are committed to providing safe products that conform to or surpass all regulatory requirements concerning formaldehyde emissions. Many of these products are used to build conventional homes, as well as to produce manufactured housing, including mobile homes and travel trailers.

In the CNN report, anchor Soledad O’Brien noted that when one evacuee had air in his trailer tested, a formaldehyde concentration of 0.22 parts per million was indicated. An on-screen graphic noted: “Formaldehyde...can cause watery eyes, burning sensations in the eyes and throat, nausea, and difficult breathing in some humans exposed at elevated levels (above 0.1 parts per million.)”

In that light, it is worthwhile to point out that a United Nations Environmental Program expert panel that reviewed 150-plus published studies concluded in a peer-reviewed report<sup>1</sup> (<http://www.formaldehyde.org/SIAR.pdf>) that eye irritation does not become significant until around 1 ppm (about five times the level detected in the aforementioned trailer) and moderate to severe eye, nose, and throat irritation occurs at 2 to 3 ppm (about 10 times the level detected in the trailer). While some agencies have used a level as low as 0.1 ppm as a threshold for irritation, the expert panel found that a level of 0.3 ppm would protect against nearly all irritation. In fact, the expert panel found that a level of 1.0 ppm would avoid eye irritation -- the most sensitive endpoint -- in 75-95% of all people exposed.

For more information, please refer to the FCI statement “The Safe Use of Formaldehyde in Wood Products.”

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<sup>1</sup> FORMALDEHYDE, SIDS Initial Assessment Report.